

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**

NEWS RELEASE

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Commissioners Wefald, Clark and Cramer

****For Immediate Release****

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Public Service Commission Unveils Online Searchable Database

The public can now access case information easier than ever before with an online searchable database the Public Service Commission unveiled today during its regular meeting.

The searchable database became part of the Commission's website as a way to improve public access to commission cases dating back to 2000. The searchable database is located at <http://www.psc.state.nd.us/actions/casearch.html>. It allows users to search by case number, date, description, type and company involved.

Commission President Susan Wefald said the searchable database significantly improves public access to the Commission's business.

"This is one of the most important improvements to public access of Commission records since I became a commissioner in 1993," Wefald said. "This database will provide the public with instant access to many of our case files without having to contact us to ask for copies."

Although case information is now available online, Wefald said people are encouraged to contact the Commission if they need assistance finding documents in a specific case or for documents that are not available online.

Commissioner Tony Clark said improving the public's access to documents is not the only benefit to the searchable database.

"This new feature means staff will spend less time looking up information and making electronic or paper copies to send to the public," Clark said. "It is much more efficient and convenient for staff and the public to use this new tool."

It is not uncommon for the Commission to receive requests for several hundred pages of documents from case files. Usually, those large files are put on a disc and mailed to the person who requested them. Now, many of those large files can simply be viewed on any computer that is connected to the Internet.

Commissioner Kevin Cramer said this new tool can also improve public participation in the cases before the commission.

"Interest in what the Commission does has been increasing in the past few years because of all of the projects we've been involved in," Cramer said. "Whether it's siting pipelines and wind farms or deciding on a rate case, this tool will allow the public to track the developments in each case anywhere a computer is available."

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